

ABSTRACT

An intermediate network element deployed in a content
5 delivery network is disclosed. The content delivery network
cooperates its content delivery effort with other intermediate
network element with similar capabilities. Distributing rules
that govern the operations of the intermediate network
element(s) are presented. These include the framework of the
10 intermediate network element(s), the format of indicating part
or whole of a rule specification to be distributed, the format of
signatures for intermediate network elements to discover each
other, the format of signaling other intermediate network
elements that a rule is distributed to, and the method of
15 determining the intermediate network element to distribute a
rule to. In addition, authoring rules that are specific to real
time streaming of contents are disclosed. A set of rule
evaluation conditions are revealed that can be triggered based
on different criteria during the streaming of real time contents.
20 A set of parameters from which rules can be based on is
disclosed.